

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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S/S - MR. ORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 116356

EXDIS LISBON AND BRUSSELS FOR EDWARD FUGIT

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UK, NI, AO, CASC

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE BRITISH VISIT TO ANGOLA: AMERICAN MERCE-
NARIES

REF: LONDON 7148 (NOTAL)

1. UK DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY DUFF'S VISIT TO LUANDA, IF
IT TAKES PLACE, MIGHT BE USEFUL IN OBTAINING MORE INFORMA-
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TION ON CAPTURED AND MISSING AMERICAN MERCENARIES. IN-

FORMATION AVAILABLE TO DEPT ON CURRENT STATUS OF CAPTURED MERCENARIES IS LIMITED TO THAT PROVIDED IN PRESS CONFERENCES OF ANGOLAN MINISTER OF JUSTICE, I.E., THAT THEY WILL BE TRIED BEGINNING JUNE 8 BEFORE "PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL" UNDER ANGOLAN LAW, AND WILL BE GUARANTEED FULL LEGAL RIGHTS, INCLUDING THAT OF APPOINTMENT OF DEFENSE LAWYERS OF THEIR OWN CHOICE. ICRC REPRESENTATIVE IN LUANDA HAS NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN ATTEMPTS TO OBTAIN FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PRISONERS OR TO CONTACT THEM.

2. AMONG THE 13 SCHEDULED TO BE TRIED ARE TWO U.S. CITIZENS -- DANIEL GEARHART AND GARY ACKER-- AND ONE ARGENTINE CITIZEN WHO IS A U.S. RESIDENT -- GUSTAVO GRILLO. ANOTHER U.S. CITIZEN MERCENARY, GEORGE BACON, REPORTEDLY ENTERED ANGOLA IN EARLY FEBRUARY ALONG WITH

GEARHART, ACKER, AND GRILLO, BUT WE HAVE HAD NO INFORMATION ON BACON'S FATE SINCE THE FOUR WERE ORIGINALLY REPORTED MISSING IN MID-FEBRUARY.

3. FOR LONDON: PLEASE CONTACT DUFF, IF HE HAS NOT ALREADY LEFT FOR LAGOS, AND REQUEST THAT, DURING HIS DISCUSSION IN LUANDA, OR LAGOS IF HE DOES NOT GET TO LUANDA, HE OBTAIN ANY INFORMATION POSSIBLE REGARDING STATUS OF GEARHART, ACKER, AND GRILLO, AND FATE OF BACON. RE GEARHART, ACKER AND BACON, WE ARE INTERESTED IN KNOWING THEIR CURRENT CONDITION, CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THEY ARE BEING HELD, WHETHER THEY ARE PERMITTED VISITORS, AND WHETHER A U.S. LAWYER WILL BE PERMITTED TO ENTER ANGOLA TO DEFEND THEM (FAMILIES ARE CURRENTLY ENGAGING A LAWYER TO DEFEND ACKER AND GEARHART). WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO KNOW IF ANY OTHER AMERICANS ARE BEING HELD. REQUEST EMBASSY INFORM DEPT AND LAGOS WHETHER EMBASSY ABLE TO CONTACT DUFF BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE.

4. FOR LAGOS: IF LONDON UNABLE CONTACT DUFF, REQUEST LAGOS DO SO, MAKING POINTS OUTLINED PARA 3. KISSINGER

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